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AUTHOR Kucinkas, Gene; Noyce, Gary
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ABSTRACT

Video Job Shadows encourages students to develop questions about a job and offers them the chance to videotape a business person answering those questions about his or her job. The program can be an effective method of teaching high school students about the world of work and the specific requirements and responsibilities of some jobs in their community. This can also be an opportunity for students to learn the basics of videotaping and editing. The goals of this program are for students to develop and complete a Video Job Shadow of a business in their community, for students to become familiar with specific jobs, and for community business people to make a positive connection to the school and also to see the school valuing them and what they do. Specific instructions on how to set up the program and the resources that will be needed are given. The project is a practical way to connect school to the work environment. Connecting students to real-world jobs and these jobs requirements can affect students in ways that guest speakers and job fairs cannot. (RJM)

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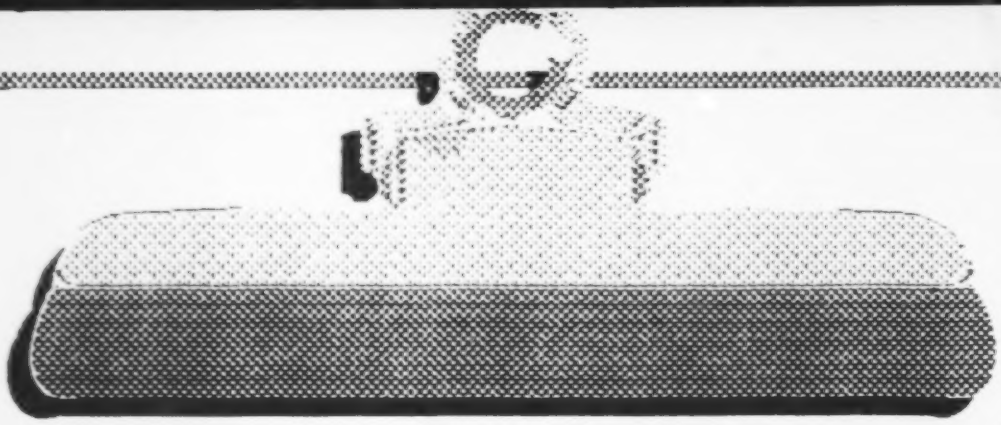

VIDEO JOB SHADOWS

Gene Kucinkas, Gary Noyce
Windham REAL School
55 High Street
Windham ME, 04062
(207) 892-4462, (207) 783-9703 (ME-Link)

Project SEED

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Video Job Shadows

Video Job Shadows involve students developing questions about a job and videotaping a business person answering those questions about their job.

General Description :

Video Job Shadows can be an effective method of teaching high school students about the world of work and the specific requirements and responsibilities of some jobs in their community. This can also be an opportunity for students to learn the basics of videotaping and editing.

The teachers involved in this project were from the Windham REAL School. The REAL School is an alternative education school. The students involved in the project were in grades 10,11, and 12.

Goals:

Students will develop and complete a Video Job Shadow of a business in their community.

Students will become familiar with specific jobs.

Community business people will make a positive connection to the school and also see the school valuing them and what they do.

Procedure:

Students begin by practicing with a video camera. They practice interviewing their peers and shooting the video. During this time the students also develop questions that they feel are appropriate and interesting to learn about any job. This is followed by creating lists of five jobs that they are interested in shadowing from which one company is selected from each student list. The teacher makes the initial business contact in order to ask for the businesses willingness to participate, at which time a first appointment is set up with the business. During the first appointment (half hour) the students and staff meet with the business person to give him/her the questions that will be asked and to become clear on the particulars of the video environment (extension cords, lighting and film angles). A second appointment is made to actually film the interview at the job site.

The second appointment (one hour) involves videotaping the student and business person talking about the job. The students also may walk around the business site and videotape the area the interviewee works in.

When the video is finished it is edited. The length of the tape may vary. (We kept ours to under ten minutes.) Duplicates of the tape can be made available to the participating business and your high school guidance department.

The timing of a Video Job Shadow is related to the teacher and students familiarity with video production. The timing can take from about four hours per video to fifteen hours spread out as a course over a school quarter or semester. If the group is inexperienced, two-three hours should be used for practice with the camera and microphone.

Video shoots should be done with the camera on a tripod and should be shot in a well lighted area. When using a camera microphone, the area must be quiet. The business contacts can be set up over the phone within about fifteen minutes. The first and second interviews will take approximately one and a half to two hours. (The first interview involves sharing the interview questions with the interviewee (half hour), the second interview involves taping the actual interview (one hour)). Editing can be contracted out for @ $20.00/hour (less than an hour should be necessary for each tape). As an alternative, the editing can be another instruction area. We learned how to edit in under an hour. The students then completed the editing themselves. The editing time is determined by the number of different scenes that are videotaped. We found that too many scenes and shots made for a difficult edit. It is best to limit the scenes shot to just two or three per video.

Resources:

A video camera (we used a Panasonic), tripod, TV and VCR are necessary to complete and check the video. During one shoot we needed to borrow a video camera. In calling area schools three cameras were available to borrow at no charge. Apparently some schools have bought cameras that they no longer use.

We used the services of Expanded Video of Portland to edit our tapes, however many high schools and local community cable companies have editing equipment available to local students and the public in general. We used a regular classroom as our practice video area. The actual shooting of the interview was done at the business site. Therefore transportation to and from the site was necessary. (The benefit to the students seems far greater

when the video is shot at the business site).

The expenses we incurred were for editing time ($100, which included practice time), duplicate copies of our videos ($11 a piece), and video tapes ($3 a piece). The expenses can be cut by using free editing equipment, and increasing the number of videos copied.

Conclusion:

This project is a practical way to connect school to the work environment. Connecting students to real world jobs and the corresponding requirements and benefits impacts the students in a way that a guest speaker or job fair does not. The students' experience of developing questions, interviewing, and carrying out the Video Job Shadow is as valuable as the final product.

The business and community people that have been contacted in this area have been more than willing to help. The only group declining to appear on video was the F.B.I.

With the increasing state as well as national emphasis on school to work connections this project is not only fun and interesting, but also a timely step in the school to work direction.